

## **The Kennet & Avon Canal Trust**

### **TRUST COUNCIL MEETING: Monday 22 May 2023, 1000 by Zoom**

**Trustees present:** Chris Sims (Chairman), Mike Bailey (to item 8), Chris Bolt, David Copley, Rob Dunton, David Fearn, Tim Pyatt, Graham Snook

**In attendance:** Darren Bone, Alison Cannon, Rob Dean

**Apologies:** Terry Mundy, Zaira Puddephatt,

## **Minutes**

1. **Welcome and apologies:** Alison Cannon was welcomed to the meeting. Terry Mundy and Zaira Puddephatt had sent apologies.
2. **Declarations of interest:** CS, CB and TP declared an interest relevant to item 7.2 as Directors of Enterprise.
3. **Approval of minutes of meeting on 20 March 2023:** Approved, subject to amending the first sentence of item 6.5 to add "but with a majority of Committee members being Trust Members".

## **4. Actions from previous meetings**

### **4.1. Approval of Young Volunteers policy**

Lesley Hooper was thanked for her work on the proposed policy and supporting Branch documentation. This was broadly agreed, subject to amending references to KARS to cover the position of those Branches (eg Crofton) not using that system, clarifying the link to the safeguarding policy and correcting a typo. CB will liaise with Lesley Hooper and Alison Cannon on application of the policy to those volunteering under the Duke of Edinburgh scheme.

### **4.2. Safeguarding Guidance**

CB apologised for not having made progress on the Guidance to support the Safeguarding Policy agreed at the last meeting. He will take this forward before the next meeting. CS reported that he had been unable to identify a Trustee to take the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **4.3. Bedwyn Wharf project**

TP informed Trustees that the planning application had been withdrawn. Only limited further work will be undertaken until a Branch volunteer is identified to take on the project management role.

## **5. Matters approved in correspondence**

- 5.1. **Amendment to Articles to be proposed at AGM:** Noted

## **6. Health and Safety**

### **6.1. Review of incidents and near misses**

MB noted an accident at a Branch meeting, which had yet to be formally reported. DB noted a recent accident on a boat.

### **6.2. Future arrangements for Health and Safety advice**

Trustees discussed future arrangements for health and safety advice. It was agreed that, while Crofton and Enterprise were developing arrangements for internal inspection and review, there

was a need for Trust-wide health and safety advice in particular on matters not covered by MAIB. CB agreed to draft possible terms of reference for that advice.

## **7. Finance and Governance**

### **7.1. Finance and Governance report**

The report was noted. Trustees noted the need to ensure that there was effective communication between those attending the AGM in person and those attending remotely.

### **7.2. Future Trust/Enterprise governance**

Trustees discussed the proposed change in reporting arrangements for Branches and the proposed terms of delegation. Although some concerns were expressed about the future handling of projects, there was general support for the proposal that 'boat' branches should in future report to the Enterprise Board. This had also received support in principle from Enterprise Directors, and DB pointed out that the change would support delivery of two of his five challenges to the Board. The importance of communication with volunteers was recognised.

It was agreed that, subject to removing the proposed requirement for a majority of Branch Management Committee members to be Members of the Trust, CB should now formally consult Branches with the aim of reaching decisions at the July meeting of Trust Council.

### **7.3. Leases and asset transfers**

CB reported on the current position with the new leases at Aldermaston and Bradford on Avon, which were close to being finalised. The terms of the transfer of the Smithy at Crofton were also close to agreement.

## **8. Report from Enterprise Board**

DB reported on four main issues: the delay to Jubilee starting regular public trips, because of high river flow; the return of KV to service, but with an overrun on the costs of repainting and installation of escape windows; concerns about the functionality of KABS, and the plan to move to an 'off the shelf' system; and changes to office staff. There will be a strategy discussion on 26 June, to consider three year budgets projections, as an input to the Trust's medium term financial review in July.

## **9. 2023 Projects**

### **9.1. Crofton 2030**

CB updated Trustees on the project. Consultants have now been appointed to carry out the three assignments.

### **9.2. Aldermaston Wash House**

Work is largely complete, with only some internal fit-out remaining.

### **9.3. Devizes Wharf**

CS indicated that no further decisions on the future of the Wharf will be taken until the results of the Crofton 2030 project are known. So far this year over £4K has been spent on the building, including £2K on additional electrical work.

### **9.4. Archive relocation**

No progress. CS will pursue. DC reminded Trustees of his view that material relating to the eastern end of the canal should be transferred to the Berkshire archive.

## **10. Communications**

### **10.1. Website replacement update**

Trustees agreed that the current website should remain live until after the AGM. Further discussion will be needed with CS, ZP and DB before the new site could be activated.

## **11. Branch reports**

### **11.1. Crofton Branch report**

This was noted. GS reported on the initial feedback from the chimney inspection, which has now taken place.

### **11.2. Other Branch reports**

The reports were noted.

## **12. Future meetings**

It was agreed that future meetings should be start at 9am. The dates for 2023 are 31 July (NB change of date), 25 September and 27 November.

## **13. Any other business**

### **13.1. Introduction by Alison Cannon**

AC described her experience and interests. CS recommended that she should be coopted to the Board, and this was agreed.

### **13.2. Other**

There was no other business.